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ABSTRACT

This document is a prospectus for a program of the National Education Association (NEA) to establish a network of teacher centers. The prospectus is divided into three parts: part one attempts to answer 10 general questions about the NEA teacher center program; part two contains information briefs for options I and II; and part three contains information briefs for options III. The definitions of the options are given as follows: option I--unified state or local association (potential member of the NEA teacher center network); option II--nonunion state or local association (potential affiliate of the NEA teacher center network); and option III--other than the above (potential) cooperating agency in the NEA teacher center network). (Authors/JA)

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MRS. CATHARINE BARRETT, President

December, 1972

Memorandum to: Association Leaders Interested In Teacher Centers

From: NEA's IPD Teacher Center Project Team

Many of you have been asking how you can get involved in Teacher Centers.

A committee of IPD staff members has worked out some possible ways. They are indicated in the enclosed prospectus.

We hope you will find it possible to become a part of our proposed Teacher Center network so both you and other NEA teacher-members can benefit.

We are looking forward to hearing from you. Your responses should be sent to:

Ole Sand, Secretary
Teacher Center Project Team
Instruction and Professional Development
National Education Association
1201 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20036

ED 079231

NEA TEACHER CENTER NETWORK:

A PROSPECTUS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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SP 006 582

Teacher Center Project Team
Instruction and Professional Development
National Education Association
1201 - 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

December, 1972

Members of the Teacher Center Project Team are: Ole Sand, secretary; Florence Fan, Thelma Horacek, Anna Hyer, Margaret Knispel, Robert Luke, Richard Mallory, Frances Quinto, Patricia Sinclair, Robert Snider, and Dave Darland, coordinator.

(Team member assignments range from 1/4 to 3/4 time, so only the equivalent of 4 full-time staff is available at this time for coordination and support services to this project.)

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All over the country today teachers are making it clear that they feel an urgency to shape their own professional development. Shaping their own development implies a power over decisions necessary to succeed as professionals. To this end, NEA launched a program on September 1, 1972, to establish a network of Teacher Centers. This network will begin with a minimum of four NEA Teacher Centers which meet the criteria defined in this prospectus (Options I and II), as well as a selected number of Teacher Centers cooperating with the NEA Centers (Option III). The role of the NEA is to be developmental in nature. It is not envisioned that NEA will unilaterally operate centers.

This prospectus has three parts. PART ONE attempts to answer ten general questions about the NEA Teacher Center Program. PART TWO contains information briefs for Options I and II (green). PART THREE contains information briefs for Option III (yellow). Following are definitions of the options: Option I -- unified state or local association (potential member of the NEA Teacher Center Network); Option II — non-unified state or local association (potential affiliate of the NEA Teacher Center Network); Option III — other than the above (potential cooperating agency in the NEA Teacher Center Network).

Three assumptions are basic to this project:

1. Teachers will shape their own continuing education by diagnosing their own needs, developing their own programs to meet those needs, and choosing from learning resources already available.
2. An environment will be generated conducive to continuing professional and personal development in a nonthreatening atmosphere.
3. The organized teaching profession will use its professional and legal strength, as well as its unparalleled communication network, to make things happen "behind the classroom door."

PART ONE — TEN QUESTIONS

The NEA Teacher Center Project Team has identified ten questions and has attempted to give some answers to each as well as brief explanations. But probably more important than the questions we have raised are those that the readers of this prospectus will ask themselves. As the planning continues, there may well be 20 questions—or even 100—especially for those who wish to become involved.

1. What does "Teacher Center" mean?

"Teacher Center" means a place—or support system for one or more places—operating for the continuing professional development of practicing teachers. Some Teacher Centers will be statewide—others local.

There are now in the United States about fifty sites that could be called Teacher Centers, even though they may have a different name. Several foreign countries also have such centers. Many are associated with teacher education institutions and are part of the pre-service program. Others are agencies of school districts or private organizations. The United States Office of Education, now operating pilot teacher renewal sites (of which teacher centers are a part), is planning further expansion of the concept.

2. Will NEA Network Teacher Centers be different from others?

Yes. NEA Teacher Centers (Options I and II) will be operated by teachers—not merely for them. Option III cooperating centers can be valuable resources to teacher-operated centers.

A distinctive attribute of an NEA Teacher Center (Option I or II) will be the role of teachers in shaping the center's policies and programs through their professional association. For years, teachers have participated only as school district employees in inservice programs planned by administrators filtering from the top down. The results frequently have been less than compelling. Now teachers will reverse the funnel and plan their own programs in NEA Teacher Centers.

NEA Teacher Centers (Options I and II) may develop mutually beneficial relationships with Option III centers cooperating with the network. NEA resources will go mainly to Option I and II centers.

3. Will all Teacher Centers in the NEA Network be alike?

No, of course not. Although alike in basic principles, they will vary in location, clientele, program content and focus, administrative pattern, and financing.

For instance, one site may focus on diagnosis of learning needs and problems; another may stress testing and evaluation (student and teacher) with

accountability as a theme; one may field test instructional programs and materials; another may work on classroom and school organization, climate, and management.

Still another kind of center could be a coordinating agency from which fifty or so teacher "circuit riders" go out to work with other teachers. Another may function as a brokerage to encourage, facilitate, and give information about programs, personnel, and materials; to assist with contracts for satellite centers; and, occasionally, to set up an ad hoc service or a demonstration workshop or laboratory for specific purposes.

4. How will the program of an NEA Teacher Center differ from current inservice programs?

> An NEA Teacher Center program will grow out of real teaching needs and problems as identified by teachers in a particular place. It will not be a predetermined program such as a credit course or an occasional inservice day. Rather, teachers will learn in creative ways.

Teachers, then, will decide the kinds of activities in which they will engage. They may select self-instructional activities; they may involve peers, students, parents in small groups; they may want some large-group events. Teachers will choose from a variety of techniques—reading, visitation, observation, internships, programed instruction, lectures, clinical and diagnostic experiences, demonstrations, guided practice, discussion groups, role playing, simulation.

Where will teachers get time to participate in a Teacher Center? There are many choices. Some teachers now have "THURSDAYS FOR THINKING." The point is that participation in a Teacher Center should be an integral part of a teacher's work load. Or—how about six weeks of school and one week in a Teacher Center? While such alternatives are being attained, another choice might be a sabbatical for full-time work in a Center—for three months, a semester, a year. Other teachers may wish to spend an occasional weekend, or a week.

5. What will be the rewards for teachers?

> Learning while teaching will become a part of the teacher's regular job, not an addition to it.

Also, a practical incentive system must be built into contracts to provide for such things as college credit, certification renewal, and salary increments. There should, however, be safeguards to ensure that the program of a Teacher Center is not bent to meet rigid certification or salary requirements.

6. What are the criteria to become part of the NEA Teacher Center Network?

> Parts TWO and THREE of this prospectus spell out the specific criteria for each option. Option III groups will not be interested in the general criteria that follow, but need only return the Information Brief in Part THREE (yellow). Before Option I and II state and/or local association leaders return the Information Brief in Part TWO (green), they will wish to study the following seven criteria from which the specifics were drawn.

a. The NEA will encourage and promote Teacher Centers only in those locations where teachers have their working conditions defined in a collective bargaining agreement signed jointly by the local school board and teachers' association. The rationale is: (1) If a Teacher Center is to do the job expected of it, teachers will be engaged in activities significantly different from those they now perform. They should have the right to participate in such activities without jeopardizing their security as school district employees; contracts will provide this security. (2) It is in the interest of the organized profession to encourage local associations to gain master agreements. NEA resources should be used to support the interests of the association.

b. Teacher Centers will focus, at least in the beginning, on the inservice education of teachers of pre-school through adult learners. But the specific focus of offerings and activities will meet the needs of teachers as determined by teachers themselves.

c. The program will be controlled by teachers. The centers will, however, be designed to support a process that guarantees dynamic interrelationships of professional needs assessments by instructional staff, of intellectual resources

available through research and development, of opportunities for on-the-job experimental practice, and of a commitment to change the progtam as analyzed data indicate change is necessary. Further, association members will choose to select outside resource personnel who can be helpful. The association probably will wish to pretest new and innovative proposals. Undoubtedly, the governing body of the Teacher Center will seek contributions from outside sources—students, parents, other citizens.

d. NEA Teacher Centers will further the united teaching profession by demonstrating a unified program—local, state, national. Unified dues must be directed toward accomplishing unity.

e. Teachers will negotiate through their associations with local and/or state school systems for designation of public funds for the Teacher Centers. Contracts may vary from locality to locality but all will have some common elements. Specific conditions and commitments are implied in the information briefs, but they will, of course, be spelled out concretely in the written contract or agreement.

In addition, associations should seek other sources of funding from both public and private sources, though these probably will not be forthcoming unless local and/or state funds have first become available, e.g., if $100,000 is now allocated annually in the Wistful Vista School District for inservice or professional development, negotiate for one-half or more of it for partial support of a Teacher Center.

f. Funding for Teacher Centers (Options I and II) will not come from or be provided at the expense of the present level of support for instructional programs for students. It should be noted, however, that the existing classroom expenditure per pupil varies from state to state in terms of what is included. The reason it is difficult to get an accurate figure on inservice costs is that these are frequently buried in expenditure per pupil. Local and state associations need to check this factor carefully, since few budgets carry an inservice item per se.

g. NEA Teacher Centers will be committed to NEA's policy on minority involvement.

7. How will decisions be made in Teacher Centers:

In Option I and II centers, program and staffing will be determined by policy boards selected by teacher associations. Option III centers will probably vary from this principle.

A central question in American education is who should make what decisions. Teacher Centers will demonstrate that the people closest to the learners —the teachers—are qualified to make more decisions than they have in the past. Unfortunately, teachers too often have been "done good to at" by their so-called superiors. "Leadership is often confused with command," as Virgil Herrick said, "but command is concerned with power over people, while leadership is concerned with power over problems." Leadership is concerned with how people can be brought to work together for common ends effectively and happily—and with the proper delineation of responsibility.

Teacher Centers can demonstrate this concept of leadership if certain fundamental values are observed: (a) tolerance, if not love, of diversity; (b) commitment and accountability—keeping one's word and delivering what is agreed upon; (c) choice in the realm of ideas is not between conflict or no conflict, but between conflict and stagnation; (d) faith in intelligence to solve problems; (e) all regulations and rules are means only—never ends.

8. How soon will the NEA Teacher Centers be operational?

By September 1, 1974, a minimum of four NEA Teacher Centers will have begun operating with a number of cooperating centers identified.

At the end of the first budget year, August 31, 1973, the following tasks will have been completed: (a) a plan of action or feasibility model(s) selected from alternatives; (b) a prospectus summarizing the action plan developed and circulated widely among affiliates; (c) firm statements of interest and participation, in accordance with the specified criteria for Options I, II and III, solicited and investigated. The NEA does not anticipate having a Teacher Center in operation at the end of the 1972-73 budget year (August 31, 1973). It is important to plan carefully with a small number of pilots that can be monitored, supported, evaluated, and redirected as necessary. These will be expanded in number as need, opportunity, and success dictate.

During fiscal year 1973-74, sites will be selected; signed agreements developed; planning completed, including identification of staff, instructional tools, and professional development strategies; plans made for self-governance in four sites. In other words, by August 31, 1974, we will be just short of prototypes.

9. What services will the NEA provide Teacher Centers selected as members or affiliates of the network (Options I and II)?

NEA will provide a variety of services to those centers selected as members or affiliates of the network.

Examples of these services are:

a. developing a memorandum of agreement spelling out our mutual relationships;

b. assistance with contract negotiations with boards of education for establishing and financing the center;

c. help in developing the Teacher Center model;

d. continuing information about promising practices, resource personnel, instructional materials, and the like;

e. occasional practice improvement workshops for small groups of teachers from other geographic areas;

f. monitoring and evaluation;

g. endorsing and, after an appropriate time, certifying the Teacher Center.

10. What mutual agreements will be developed with cooperating agencies (Option III)?

Cooperating agencies will have informal relationships with the NEA network. NEA services will be of a different and more limited nature than those for members and affiliates.

Cooperating agencies should be willing to:

a. identify resource people who might help launch Teacher Centers in other locations;

b. share materials at cost;

c. serve as visitation sites;

d. others to be determined as the relationship develops.

NEA will serve Option III sites by:

a. using its communication network to let others know what Option III sites are doing;

b. letting Option III sites know what others are doing;

c. referring individuals and groups to Option III sites;

d. giving advice on national and/or regional seminars on Teacher Centers sponsored by others;

3. hosting similar conferences if resources permit.

* * * * *

Now that you have read PART ONE of this prospectus, the IPD Teacher Center Project Team hopes you will want to become a part of it. Now comes the work! First, turn to the form that is appropriate for you—green or yellow. If you turn to the green, you will fill out certain portions, depending on whether you represent a state or local association. The directions are self-explanatory. If you are an agency other than an education association, you will obviously have less work to do in filling out the yellow form.

We are not setting a firm deadline, but we would like to have these forms in our office shortly after the New Year. Then we will have a review panel to consider all applications. You will be hearing from us and maybe seeing us. Resources permit visits to only about a dozen sites. We hope you will be one of them.

PART TWO – INFORMATION BRIEF
(Option I and II)

The following data are supplied to support our request to be considered for (check one):

___ OPTION I.* Unified State or Local Associations
(Potential members of the NEA Teacher Center Network)

___ OPTION II. Non-unified State or Local Associations
(Potential affiliates of the NEA Teacher Center Network)

(For Option III, see pages 18-19)

1. a. Name of Association or UniServ unit: _____

   _____

   b. Address: _____

   _____

   c. Phone (include area code): _____

   d. Date of unification: _____

2. Names of persons completing this information form:

   a. For the Membership:

      Name: _____

      Position in Association: _____

      Position in School District: _____

      Address: _____

      _____

   b. For the Association Staff:

      Name: _____

      Position: _____

      Address: _____

      _____

*Option I is for associations that are unified (local, state, and national) in which the local has a negotiated agreement.

State associations fill out questions 3 to 12 (below).

Local associations fill out questions 14 to 37 on pages 13 to 17.

FOR STATE ASSOCIATIONS

3. Number of local associations affiliated with state association: _____

4. Number of teachers employed in the state: _____

   as of (date): _____

5. Name of staff with assigned responsibilities for instruction and professional development. Also indicate, in full-time equivalents, the percentage of time devoted by each to work in this area.

   a. Name: _____

      Title: _____ % of time: _____

      Address (if different from answer to question 1):

      _____

      _____

   b. Name: _____

      Title: _____ % of time: _____

      Address (if different from question 1):

      _____

      _____

6. Number of UniServ units in your state: _____

7. Responsibilities of UniServ in instruction and professional development:

   a. _____

      _____

   b. _____

      _____

   c. _____

      _____

8. Briefly describe the state-wide effort undertaken by the state association to stimulate and improve professional development within the state:

_____

_____

_____

_____

How would you rate the activities described in your answer?

Poor _____ Fair_____ Good _____ Excellent _____

9. What are three additional ingredients required to strengthen and/or extend the effort indicated in question 8? List in priority order:

a. _____

_____

_____

b. _____

_____

_____

c. _____

_____

_____

10. What kind of consultative or staff service would be most helpful to you from the NEA if you are selected as a part of the NEA Teacher Center Network?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. What kind of consultative or staff service would be most helpful to you from the State Department of Education in the development of a teacher center?

12. What kind of consultative service would be most helpful to you from the colleges or universities in your state in the development of a teacher center?

FOR LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

14. Name of the executive director or UniServ director:

_____

Address (if different from question 1): _____

_____

_____

15. Number of school districts included in local association or UniServ unit:

_____

16. Name of staff person in state association office who has worked closely with the local or UniServ unit in instructional improvement:

Name: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

_____

17. If there is more than one district served, would you expect a single teacher center to serve more than one district? YES_____ NO_____

If "yes," it will be necessary to answer the following questions (17 - 37) for each district to be considered. (Make photo copies of this form.)

18. a. Number of students in district: _____

b. Grade range of students in district: _____

c. Number of teachers in district: _____

d. Number of teachers with membership in local: _____

19. Does the school district have a negotiated agreement (master contract) with the local? YES_____ NO_____

If "Yes," what is the date of the latest agreement and when does it expire?

_____

20. Are local school district and/or state funds currently budgeted for in-service education and professional development? YES_____ NO_____

If "yes," please state amount $_____ and send pertinent information about the in-service program.

21. Have any of the funds listed in 20 (above) been turned over to your local or UniServ unit as a result of either formal or informal negotiations? YES_____ NO_____

If "yes," please answer the following:

a. How much has been allocated to the local? $_____

b. How are the funds being used?

_____

_____

_____

_____

c. Do you have complete authority or do you share decisions with the administration? (Send along supporting documents.)

_____

_____

_____

22. Is provision for in-service education included as part of the official contract language? YES_____ NO_____

If "yes," please attach a copy of applicable paragraphs.

23. Does a "council on instruction" or other group exist which, while not part of the master contract, provides for consultation and planning between representatives of the board of education and the local association or UniServ unit? YES_____ NO_____

If "yes," supply a copy of the agreement or other official statement of purpose and membership.

24. Has the executive committee of the association and/or UniServ unit taken official action supportive of association involvement in instruction and professional development or in-service education? YES_____ NO_____

If "yes," please attach copy.

25. Does the local and/or UniServ unit have a committee charged with instruction and professional development or in-service education? YES_____ NO_____

a. If "yes," give official name and amount of budget allocated by local:

_____ $ _____

b. What percentage of your local or UniServ staff time is spent on instruction and professional development? _____

26. Does your local have an instruction and professional development program of its own? YES_____ NO_____

If "yes," briefly describe: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

27. Has the state association provided any direct service to the local in the past two years relating to instruction or professional development? YES_____ NO_____

If "yes," briefly describe the services and how much time was spent:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ Time: _____

28. How would you rate the school district's in-service program?

Poor _____ Fair _____ Good _____ Excellent _____

29. Why did you rate it as you did? _____

_____

_____

_____

30. Regardless of your rating (even if it is already "good" or "excellent"), what do you think is the one most important action that needs to be taken to improve it?

_____

_____

_____

_____

31. How would you rate your local association's improvement of instruction program?

Poor _____ Fair _____ Good _____ Excellent _____

32. Why did you rate it as you did? _____

_____

_____

_____

33. Regardless of your rating (even if it is already "good" or "excellent"), what do you think is the one most important action that needs to be taken to improve it?

_____

_____

_____

_____

34. To what extent are institutions of higher education involved in the in-service education program of the district?

Not involved _____ Help occasionally _____ Cooperative _____

Highly cooperative _____ Dominate _____

35. What is needed to improve their involvement?_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

36. What kind of consultative or staff service would be most helpful to your local or UniServ unit from the NEA if it is selected as a member of the NEA National Teacher Center Network?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

37. a. Name of committee or other official body (other than the executive committee) which will have responsibility for teacher center activities:

_____

b. Name of chairman of above:_____

c. Position in school district:_____

d. Address:_____

_____

PART THREE – INFORMATION BRIEF

OPTION III. Agencies Interested in Cooperating With NEA Teacher Center Network

1. Name of association, organization, college, institute or agency:

   _____

   Address: _____

   _____

2. Geographical area served: _____

3. Clientele served: _____

4. a. Principal funding source(s): _____

   _____

   b. % public funds: _____ % private funds: _____

5. Principal program emphasis (individual instruction, counseling, elementary education, community colleges, etc.)

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

6. Outstanding feature or distinguishing characteristic:

   _____

   _____

   _____

7. Names of three individuals in local or state education associations with whom you have worked over the past several years in instruction and professional development:

   Name: _____

   Position: _____

   Agency: _____

   Address: _____

   _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

8. Name and title of staff member who would work most directly with the NEA Teacher Center Network:

Name: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

_____

9. Name of committee or other official body (other than the executive committee) which would have responsibility for teacher center activities:

_____

10. Name of chairman of above: _____

Address: _____

_____

Date: _____

Dr. Ole Sand, Secretary
Teacher Center Project Team
Instruction & Professional Development
National Education Association
1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Dr. Sand:

Having read and studied the Prospectus, the

_____
(Name of association or agency)

wishes to be considered for participation in, or cooperation with, the NEA Network of Teacher Centers.

We have selected Option: (check one)

☐ I Unified state or local association* (potential member of the NEA Teacher Center Network)

☐ II Non-unified state or local association or local association without negotiated agreement (potential affiliate of the NEA Teacher Center Network)

☐ III Other than above (potential cooperating agency in the NEA Teacher Center Network)

as the most appropriate vehicle for our involvement at this time.

This expressed interest obligates neither our association or agency, nor the NEA, to our participation in the proposed NEA Network of Teacher Centers. Any official involvement will be subject to executing a memorandum of agreement in which the specific obligations of the NEA and our association or agency will be described in detail. The sole purpose of this reply is to provide the NEA with information necessary for further planning and to provide our association or agency an opportunity for further involvement as the NEA Teacher Center Network is developed.

Name: _____

Position: _____

Association or Agency: _____

Address: _____

_____

*Local associations, to be eligible for Option I, must have negotiated agreement with local board of education.

Instruction and Professional Development, National Education Association
1201 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036